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the archdeaconry of Worcester. March 1857.
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J. Reuben

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J. M. Lee
J. Peter

NOTES OF MEETINGS

OF

The Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Worcester,

MARCH, 1857.

TO THE

Reverend the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Worcester.

REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,

The Meetings of the Clergy of this Archdeaconry, held at Stratford, Pershore, Worcester, and Kidderminster, on the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th ult., occupied altogether some fourteen hours, and were attended by about one hundred and fifty of the Clergy, of whom sixty-seven spoke.

You are aware that our subject was, The best means of "sustaining and extending the Missionary efforts of the Church, at Home and Abroad;" but chiefly, "The Spiritual Necessities of the People of this Land."

You also know that I had a reason for seeking your counsel at this time, arising out of my having been appointed a Member of a Committee of Convocation, to which this subject had been entrusted for deliberation.

Independently, however, of that reason for holding these Meetings, I shall always remember them with pleasure and thankfulness. They have elicited many valuable suggestions. They have brought to light the concurrence of many minds on certain important points. They have proved that intense earnestness may declare itself without a word of party spirit, (of which not a trace was discernible from the first day to the last) and that this charity may be maintained without any compromise or suppression of honest convictions. Above all, I am thankful to remember that they have witnessed to the lively and more general appreciation of the spiritual wants of our Country, and to the distinct recognition of this great truth,—That the conversion of sinners ought to be much more zealously and faithfully sought after by all possible means, and supplicated continually from God.

I made Notes at the Meetings, and possibly it may be pleasant and useful to some of my brethren to have a Digest of them. There are hints amongst them, which need not wait for any new organization, in order to their being carried into effect.

In arranging these Notes, I am not conscious of having omitted a single suggestion; neither have I allowed myself to be influenced by considering whether or no I concurred in what was recommended. I have only attempted to throw them into a sort of order, and so leave them to be estimated according to their real value.

In such a form, however, they are only dry skeletons, and I heartily regret that some of them are not clothed with the life and energy in which they were first presented to us, instinct with “thoughts that breathe and words that burn.”

No attempt is here made to mark what appears to myself to be the comparative worth of these numerous and sometimes conflicting suggestions, of various and independent minds. Some of them were both reiterated, and hailed with expressions of approval; others were solitary recommendations, with which concurrence was at least not expressed. I undertake no more than to dis-

tinguish, by a somewhat larger type, the suggestions which seemed to me to meet with the most acceptance. The rest undoubtedly appear to stand on an equality; but I venture to say generally, that I believe the most important subjects filled the foremost place, being either most vigorously enunciated, or repeated by several speakers.

I remain,

Reverend and dear Brethren,

Your faithful Brother and Servant in Christ,

RICHARD B. HONE.

Halesowen, near Birmingham,

2nd April, 1857.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE BEST MEANS OF SUSTAINING AND
EXTENDING THE MISSIONARY EFFORTS OF THE CHURCH,
AT HOME, AND IN FOREIGN PARTS.

An Increase of the Episcopate in England and Wales.

A Bishop to be set over every great Town, or Populous District.

Bishops to be very numerous, as in some parts of the Church of Christ in early times, with small spheres, and with inconsiderable incomes.

An increase of the Episcopate, with a proportionate increase of the subordinate Offices in the Church.

An Increase of the Colonial and Missionary Episcopate.

More Medical Missionaries.

More Theological Colleges in the Colonies.

An extensive Subdivision of Parishes.

Such a Subdivision as that no Parish shall have a greater Population than 2,000.

Further Subdivision, but made with caution, as possible to be carried too far.

The Sale of Livings to be prohibited, or at least restrained.

Sittings in Parish Churches to be unappropriated, and free to all.

Appropriation of Sittings only, not of whole Pews.

In Town Churches, where Seats are appropriated, that privilege to be suspended at one Sunday Service, and the whole Church to be at that time free.

More Churches.

Iron, or other temporary Churches.

“Ragged” Churches.

Preaching Places, (Mission Chapels) to be built in great numbers, to meet the immediate wants of rapidly increasing populations.

A considerable Increase of the number of the Clergy.

Much more, and more effective, Preaching, to be maintained on some recognized system; as, by one or more of the following plans:—

1. Colleges of Clergy in large Towns, licensed by the Bishop, and in subordination to the Incumbents.
2. Colleges of Deacons or Subdeacons, with the like authority, and under the like control.
3. Additional Curates, provided according to the wants of Parishes.
4. The Clergy of small Parishes, having suitable qualifications, to enrol themselves for service, (a fortnight or more in a year) in populous districts, on the application of Incumbents;— and each to be employed according to his gifts, as in the Schools, Visiting, or Preaching.

5. Diocesan Preachers to be maintained, in connection with the Cathedrals, ready for service wherever they may be called.
 6. Special Mission-Services to be held, with the aid of the best-qualified Preachers, for the revival of religion.
 7. Occasional extraordinary Services, as in Durham Cathedral.
 8. An organization of Missionary Agency, by which every Parish in a Diocese may be visited at regular intervals, with the consent of the Incumbent, the object being the effectual awakening of the people; according to the tried plan of the Irish Home Mission, from 1832 to 1839.
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More frequent Services.

Services at times chosen with reference to the habits and convenience of the people.

Shorter Services.

Services entirely new.

Services made attractive by the aid of Music.

A Special Service for Children.

Afternoon and Evening Communion.

Plainer and more familiar Preaching. Conversational Preaching.

Open-Air Preaching.

Public Catechising.

Teaching with the help of Pictures, for illustration.

Yearly Confirmations.

Half-yearly, or even Quarterly Confirmations, when the Episcopate is sufficiently increased.

Godliness to be more carefully enquired into, as an essential qualification for Holy Orders.

More Theological Colleges.

The University Course to be shortened, as regards its secular subjects, to those who may declare their intention of offering themselves for Holy Orders, and the time thus gained to be devoted to theological study in the University.

The University Course to be absolutely shortened to candidates for Holy Orders.

Preachers in the Universities to be appointed to preach on the Ministerial Office, and to direct those who have special gifts to the service for which they are best suited, and for which their peculiar talents ought to be cultivated.

The Ordination of persons of inferior education to that now required.

A Subdiaconate.

Tradesmen, and other persons in business, to be admissible to the Order of Deacon and Subdeacon, without forsaking their worldly calling.

A longer continuance in the Order of Deacons.

No Clergyman to be admitted to any Incumbency until he has been five years in Holy Orders.

Lay influence to be called into much more exercise.

Lay agency, by Scripture Readers.

The Services of Ladies to be more generally sought.

Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods, under proper control, and acting as helpers to the Clergy in large Parishes.

Guilds.

Associations of young Men in Parishes, for specific active service.

Laymen to be induced to undertake the work which does not specially belong to the Ministerial Office.

Laymen to be licensed and encouraged to teach, or preach, in rooms, or in the open air.

Communicants to be organized, as an agency for drawing the people to Church.

Parish Clerks, better qualified than is usual now, to be helpers to the Pastor.

A Society of Sponsors to be formed from amongst the Communicants in each Parish, and to be ready to fulfil that office when required to do so.

Sponsorship to be either revised, or abolished, as being at present a frequent obstacle to the baptism of children in populous parishes.

Middle Schools to be generally established.

Church Discipline to be improved.

Prayers to be provided for the people to use in private, supplicating the much wider diffusion of true religion and virtue.

Letters commendatory (such as are now given to Emigrants) to be given to those who migrate from the country into populous places. Such letters to be addressed to the Clergy of the Districts in which the bearers are about to reside.

Sympathy and Unity among the Clergy to be desired, prayed for, cultivated, and promoted.

With a view to increased Unity, some special means to be used, as,—

1. A Yearly Gathering of the Clergy at the Cathedral, with an appropriate Sermon, and the Holy Communion. ; or
2. Smaller assemblages, first uniting in special prayer in private, and then proceeding to a Public Service.

More Meetings of the Clergy, under an official head, for mutual counsel.

Dioecesan Synods.

Convocation to have more liberty of action.

A Reformed Convocation.

Improvement of the Dwellings of the Poor as essential to the success of any efforts for their spiritual good.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL PECUNIARY MEANS FOR STRENGTHENING AND SUSTAINING THE MISSIONS OF THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The Weekly Offertory.

The same,—with an announcement of the object to which the collection is to be appropriated, followed by an acknowledgement of the amount contributed, on the Church Doors.

An occasional Offertory.

The Offertory sometimes in the Evening.

In any of the above cases, the introduction of the Offertory to be made with the concurrence of the Congregation.

Collections to be made, in every Parish, and under authority, two, three, or four times a year, and to be compulsory on the Clergy.

The Objects of the Collections to be prescribed, but the choice of the Channels, through which they are aided, to be left to the Clergy.

Such General Objects might be,

- i. Foreign and Colonial Missions.
- ii. Home Missions. "
- iii. Church Building.
- iv. Education.

Parochial Associations, or Committees, in aid of various Objects or Societies.

Quarterly Meetings in Parishes.

Periodical Meetings in large Towns, in aid of Objects prescribed by Episcopal letters; these to be attended by Deputations.

The Circulation of accurate Statistics, shewing clearly the wants for which provision is to be made.

The Appropriation to each Diocese of its own Surplus Episcopal and Capitular Revenues.

A more economical Management of the business of the Ecclesiastical Commission, effecting a great saving in respect of Law and Agency.

The Subdivision of Endowments as well as of Parishes.

The Restoration to Parishes requiring further Pastoral Assistance, of the whole inappropriate Tithes, where they are held by the Ecclesiastical Commission.

An Actual Assessment of the Tenth yearly, after the next avoidance, in Parishes where the Endowment is above a certain value.

